United Nations

Daily Highlights

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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council urges Libya to provide "full and effective" response to requests for cooperation in establishing responsibility for terrorist acts against Pan Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772.

- Secretary-General reiterates his deep concern at escalating violence in Somalia, which, he says, "has growing implications for Horn of Africa".

- Secretary-General says both sides in Cyprus welcome proposal to have his representatives continue discussions on the island in early February.

- United Nations Development Programme to assist Government of El Salvador in setting up national civilian police force as part of the country's reconstruction programme.

- Among priorities of Committee on Discrimination against Women this year is elimination of discrimination by law and in practice, according to Director of Division for Advancement of Women.

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The Security Council today voted unanimously to condemn the destruction of Pam Am flight 103 and UTA flight 772 and the resulting loss of hundreds of lives, and strongly deplored the fact that the Libyan Government has not yet responded effectively to the requests to cooperate fully in establishing responsability for the terrorist acts that led to the destruction of the aircraft.

The 15-member Council also urged the Libyan Government to provide immediately "a full and effective response" to those requests, as a means to contribute to the elimination of international terrorism and it requested the Secretary-General to seek the cooperation of Libya to do so.

The Council took that action by adopting resolution 731 (1992) in which it expressed concern and disturbance by the "worldwide persistence of acts of international terrorism in all its forms, which endanger or take innocent lives, have a deleterious effect on international relations and jeopardize the security of States".

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The Council also expressed deep concern over results of investigations which implicated officials of the Libyan Government, and which are contained in Security Council documents. The documents include also the requests addressed to the Libyan authorities by France, the United Kingdom and the United States, in connection with the legal procedures related to these attacks. Four letters from Libya were also before the Council.

By its decision, the Council further reaffirmed its resolution 286 (1970) and resolution 635 (1989), in which it had called on States to take all possible legal steps to prevent any interference with international civil air travel and to cooperate in preventing all acts of terrorism.

Speaking to correspondents following the meeting, Council President Sir David Hannay called the adoption of the resolution "very encouraging" and said it was sending a clear message to the Libyan Government to cooperate fully and effectively with the requests by France, the United Kingdom and the United States in investigating the "horrific acts of terrorism". The Council President said he hoped for "prompt action" by the Libyans in response to the Council's decision, although no timeframe had been set.

The Council was scheduled to hold consultation this afternoon on the situation in Somalia and Cambodia, respectively.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has reiterated his deep concern at the escalating violence in Somalia, which has taken an increasingly heavy toll on the population and which, he said, "has growing implications for the Horn of Africa".

In a statement through his spokesman yesterday, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said he had carefully studied the report of his envoy to Somalia, Under-Secretary-General James O.C. Jonah, and had been conducting consultations with members of the Security Council with a view to appropriate Council action on the cessation of hostilities in the capital.

According to the statement, Mr. Boutros-Ghali had also met with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Salim A. Salim, in an exchange of views on how best to achieve cooperation between the United Nations and the OAU on the situation.

Reaffirming the link between a stable situation in Somalia and the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the Secretary-General said arrangements were now being drawn up by United Nations agencies to launch large scale humanitarian assistance programmes, once the parties agree to end the hostilities.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali met today and yesterday with President George Vassiliou, the leader of the Greek Cypriot Community, and with Rauf Denktash, the leader of the Turkish Cypriot Community.

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In a statement through his spokesman today, Mr. Boutros-Ghali said the discussions had offered a useful opportunity to review the Cyprus question. He stressed the importance of maintaining the momentum which had been achieved last year and of proceeding expeditiously to complete the set of ideas of an overall framework agreement. Both leaders responded positively to the Secretary-General's proposal to have his representatives resume the discussions with the two sides in Cyprus in early February.

The Secretary-General has also received letters from the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey supporting the resumption of the talks and agreeing to meet with his representatives.

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has announced that it will help the Government of El Salvador set up a national civilian police force, as part of the country's reconstruction programme.

In what has been described as an "unprecedented move", UNDP's Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, Fernando Zumbado, explained that the Agency had gone beyond its conventional mandate of providing technical assistance for development to meet security needs of the Salvadorians.

More than 5,000 police cadres are to be trained over a two-year period with UNDP support, at an estimated cost of $6 million. The funds will be raised through an appeal to the international community.

The new civil police force in El Salvador will replace the present one, in keeping with the terms of the cease-fire agreement signed on January 16 between the Government of El Salvador and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN). It is expected to enforce law and order, while guaranteeing the rights and freedoms of the citizens of El Salvador within a democratic framework.

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One of the priorities of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women this year was the elimination of de jure and de facto discrimination, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, Chafika Meslem, told the Committee yesterday. The gap between law and practice was most blatant in that area and it was necessary to inform women of their rights. The Division this year would organize a group of experts to facilitate that objective, she said.

As it began its two-week session yesterday, the Committee considered the initial report of Barbados on measures it has taken as a State party to implement the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

The representative of Barbados, Marva Alleyne, told the Committee that women in her country, who constituted a majority of the voting population, enjoyed general legal protection. They had to contend however with widespread teenage pregnancy and headed some 43 per cent of the nation's households.

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